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RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4438
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0303
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0270
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0316
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4030
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2301
RUEHK/T/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0342
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0976
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1065
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000314

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DEPT FOR G/TIP SHEREEN FARAJ AND MEGAN HALL; INL FOR ANDREW BUHLER AND NORIS BALABANIAN; SCA FOR JESSICA MAZZONE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [KCRM](#) [KCOR](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARIAN RESIGNS AMIDST HUMAN TRAFFICKING INVESTIGATION

Classified By: Political Officer Tim Buckley for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) On March 10 an article on the news website centrasia.ru reported that Ms. Matlyuba Burxanova, a member of the Oliy Majlis, the lower house of Parliament, resigned over allegations of human trafficking. Embassy LES Political Assistant confirmed this information with Marifdjon Usmanov (please protect), the Deputy Chief in Human Rights Ombudswoman Rashidova's office, who has previously provided reliable information about the Parliament. Usmanov said that Burxanova, who is from Navoiy Province, was forced out of her position despite the protective efforts of the powerful head of the Navoiy Metallurgy and Gold Company, Nikolai Kucharsky.

Usmanov believes that the criminal investigation may be dropped in return for her resignation, but it is significant that the Government of Uzbekistan forced out a well-connected Parliamentarian due to possible human trafficking allegations. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) The independent news website centrasia.ru published an article on March 10 reporting the "voluntary resignation" of Burxanova, who represents Navoiy Province in the Oliy Majlis, which is the lower house of Parliament. Burxanova was a member of the Parliament's International Affairs and International Relations Committee. The article said that in January the state press reported that Burxanova "had earlier been involved with the shipment of prostitutes overseas." The resignation notice has not yet appeared in any state-controlled publications, and the article notes she maintained her innocence in her letter of resignation.

¶3. (SBU) A January 17 article on uzmetronom.com also reported these allegations, noting that investigators discovered Burxanova's activities while investigating her sons. One son, Batir Ymurov, was reportedly sentenced to eight years in prison for illegal use of a Russian Federation passport, and another unnamed son was fired from his position in the Office

of the Prosecutor General for drug use. The uzmetronom.com article said Burxanova had arranged to send women to work as prostitutes in Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey, each of which are common destinations for Uzbek trafficking victims.

¶4. (C) On March 12 Embassy LES Political Assistant met with Usmanov, who confirmed that Burxanova was forced to tender her resignation to the Central Election Committee and that there is a criminal investigation into alleged human trafficking activities. (Note: Usmanov is one of a few contacts with close knowledge of the Parliament and has previously provided reliable information. End note). Usmanov said that Burxanova is closely connected with the powerful head of the Navoiy Mettalurgy and Gold Company Nikolai Kucharsky, who tried to protect her from the investigations. Usmanov believes that the investigation may be dropped in return for her resignation, which could appease powerful interests.

NORLAND